

From: wayne barker
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 10:46am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern,

This email is being written to express my deep disappointment with the proposed settlement of the Microsoft Antitrust case.

I am a systems administrator at a design firm. As a computer professional, I have used Microsoft products for years - I am typing this email on one now.

Over the 10+ years that I have used computers professionally, I have often been amazed at the unfair and inhibiting practices that Microsoft engages in. Their reputation as the "Evil Empire" is not a title lightly given nor is it undeserved. There have been an inconceivable number of times that I have had to patch a system/server/application due to shoddy programming by Microsoft, or worse yet to try to work around an intentional disabling of a feature that made a competitors product unusable.

Microsoft is certainly capable of producing a quality product - I use several, in fact the majority of the computers I personally own run legally purchased copies of Microsoft operating systems and applications.

However, I strongly support a the use of penalty, forced restructuring, and individual user remuneration, in order to convince Microsoft, in a definitive way, that they will no longer be allowed to manipulate and (more often than not) impede technological and social advancement in this country solely in order to maximize their profits.

There is an attitude, from Bill Gates down, that we work for them, that they will give us what they want to give us, and damn America if they don't like it. As has been suggested in a recent initiative to expand broadband access throughout this country as a means to enhance economic rejuvenation, the technological health and robustness of this country IS a national security interest. I do not believe for one second that Microsoft would fail to take advantage of any opportunity to further their market dominance, at the expense of ANY other concern, including and specifically those that threaten the reliability and independence of the computers users of this world.

Indeed, the cynical nature of their proposed settlement, given that it would seriously degrade one of their few competitors small niche markets (Apple in education, where Apple is a much better suited product) is just one example of a DAILY litany of abuse, neglect, and misinformation.

Our society, more than almost any other on this planet, has embraced the Technological and Computer revolutions. Our future is CLEARLY tied to these areas, as our dominance in other resources and arenas wanes in an ever-more

free-market world.

Given this, we as a country simply cannot afford a behemoth of this stature and hubris to define and manipulate our progress. Standard Oil was a ubiquitous force which controlled vast stretches of our countries energy supplies, but was dethroned in a move that strengthened our nations health and enhanced progress. AT&T WAS the "phone company", but their breakup, in allowing and encouraging competition and innovation in the communications infrastructure, was a significant force in encouraging our current technological revolution.

It is now the time to restructure, penalize, and otherwise mollify Microsoft's ambitions, so that the health, wealth, and opportunity of our future is that much more realizable. We have enough threats and issues to deal with outside of this country, please deal effectively with this internal one, and place us on a firmer more secure footing for the trials that lie ahead.

And thank you very much for allowing a member of the public to express their concerns over this issue - I am honored.

Sincerely,

Wayne Barker
Systems Administrator
Savage Design Group, Inc.

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wayne barker - systems admin - savage design group, inc.
4203 yoakum - houston, tx 77006 - 713-522-1555
wbarker@savagedesign.com - www.savagedesign.com